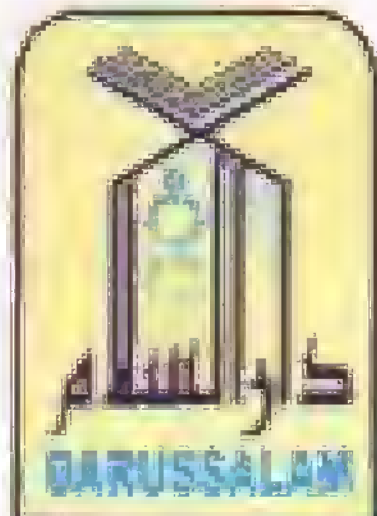


The Golden Series of the Prophet's Companions

علي بن أبي طالب عليه السلام - رابع الخلفاء الراشدين

'Ali bin Abi Tâlib عليه السلام
The Fourth Caliph of Islam



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Second Edition: July 2004

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King Fahd National Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Abdul Basit Ahmad

Ali bin Abi Talib the fourth Caliph of Islam -Riyadh.

48p., 14x21 cm. ISBN 9960-717-89-5

I- Ali bin Abi Talib, Caliph, 35-40 Hi-Title

II- Prophet's Companions and Successors

239.9 dc 5075/21

Legal Deposit no. 5075/21

ISBN 9960-717-89-5

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135, Bd de Ménilmontant- 75011 Paris

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Fax: 0033-01- 43 57 44 31

E-mail: essalam@essalam.com

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'Ali bin Abi Tâlib The Fourth Caliph of Islam

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Published by
DARUSSALAM
Publishers & Distributors
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



In the Name of Allâh,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

“Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allâh [i.e., they have gone out for *Jihâd* (holy fighting), and showed not their backs to the disbelievers]; of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e. have been martyred); and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed (i.e. they never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allâh) in the least.” (33:23)

Publisher's Note

All praises and thanks are due to Allâh, the Lord of 'Âlamîn (mankind, Jinn and all that exists), and peace be upon the Master of the Messengers, Muhammad, his family and his Companions.

Darussalam is pleased to present this valuable series, '*The Golden Series of the Prophet's Companions*' to the Muslim youth. The purpose of these books is to enlighten our youth about the lives of the greatest heroes of Islam, the Prophet's Companions. Also, we wish to increase the enthusiasm of the Muslim youth for following and adhering to their religion. In this way, these books achieve two very important tasks: educating our youth and encouraging them to be good Muslims.

The following story titled '*Ali bin Abi Tâlib* ﷺ – *The Fourth Caliph of Islam*' is the life story of one of the closest Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. He was the first boy to believe in Islam as he was very close to the Prophet ﷺ and lived in his house. He also married Fâtimah رضي الله عنها, the Prophet's daughter. During his life in the Prophet's house, he learned from him many things about the Noble Qur'ân. He was humble, just and tender. His life was a true dedication to the support of the Prophet ﷺ and Islam. The Prophet ﷺ took him as a brother. His rank among

the Muslims was very high to the extent that the Prophet ﷺ told him that he was to him like Hârûn was to Mûsâ عليهما السلام.

His bravery and heroism were without equal. He killed several renowned enemies of Islam in individual combat and conquered several fortresses and towns.

We hope that these books are beneficial to our Muslim youth, as they are the future of Islam. We at Darussalam realize the importance of good Islamic literature for Muslim children, especially in the West where non-Islamic influences are so strong. For this reason, we feel that the availability of this series will be a valuable aid in instilling a genuine love for Islam in our youths. We would like to thank the author, Mr. Abdul Basit Ahmad, the editor, Mr. Aqeel Walker, and Mr. Muhammad Ayub Sapra for their diligent work in preparing this series. As Allâh says:

“Is there any reward for good other than good?” (55:60)

And our final invocation is that all praises are due to Allâh, the Lord of all that exists.

Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager

Foreword

Friends normally influence the behaviour of each other. This relationship becomes more evident when two persons live together like members of one family. How then, if a boy lives under the care of a Prophet. For sure, the influence would be so great to the extent that the boy would most of the time become a true copy of the said Prophet ﷺ.

This is the case of our hero, ‘Ali bin Abi Tâlib ؑ. He was the cousin of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Since early childhood, ‘Ali ؑ lived with the Prophet ﷺ and learned from him how to be true, trustworthy, humble, and honest. He also learned from the Prophet ﷺ how to strongly defend his faith and sacrifice everything for the cause of Truth.

The Prophet ﷺ took him as his brother. He once told him:

“Don’t you like to be to me like Hârûn was to Mûsâ, however, there will be no Prophet after me.”

The Prophet ﷺ also gave him his beloved daughter Fâtimah رضي الله عنها in marriage to foster their intimate relationship.

Since childhood, ‘Ali never kneeled before an idol, never indulged himself in the vices of the day

and never spent a minute of his precious time looking for superficial pleasures of life. He remained true to the morals taught to him by the Prophet ﷺ to the last minute of his life.

‘Ali ؓ was a real hero. He fought in all the battles of Islam except one and was always victorious. He challenged known heroes of his time and defeated them.

His wisdom and justice excelled all examples and his eloquence added much to the Arabic language to the extent that he left for us many statements and proverbs that indicate how wise and knowledgeable he was. As he was very close to the Prophet ﷺ, he acquired great knowledge of Islam and the Noble Qur’ân.

‘Ali ؓ led a humble life. Once, he and his wife, Fâtimah رضي الله عنها, were eating some dry bread. A beggar knocked at the door of their house and asked for some food. They gave him the piece of dry bread they had and spent the whole day with empty stomachs.

Let us now read the story of this great Companion of the Prophet ﷺ in order to learn how to follow his example in our lives.

Abdul Basit Ahmad

Introduction

The Prophet ﷺ suffered a lot to propagate the message of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula. All the chiefs of the Quraish, the tribe to which the Prophet ﷺ belonged, rejected to follow the new religion because they did not like to put behind their false deities, to treat the poor with justice and to be kind to their slaves. They felt that the new faith was aiming at pulling the carpet from under their feet. No one of them thought of the day when all people would be presented before Allâh to account for their good and bad deeds. They said to the Prophet ﷺ that they would not be resurrected after death and that if Allâh would punish them for their deeds, let Him do it while they were alive. They were ill minded because they thought that the life they were leading was the last one and that they would end in dust forever.

The Prophet ﷺ was preaching to them that they would be resurrected after death and that they would face their Lord, Who would reward them for their good deeds and punish them for their bad deeds. He promised them Paradise if they believed in him and the message of Islam and threatened them that they would dwell in hellfire if they believed him and hold to their false beliefs.

The Boy and the Prophet ﷺ

Background

‘Ali bin Abi Tâlib ؓ belonged to the house of Abdul Muttalib of Bani Hashim clan from the Quraish tribe. After the death of Abdul Muttalib, ‘Ali’s father, Abu Tâlib, became the chief of the clan. He took care of Muhammad when he was only eight years old for he was an orphan. He lost his father before he was born and lost his mother when he was only six years old. His grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, took care of him but he passed away when Muhammad was only eight years old. Abu Tâlib loved his nephew dearly. When Muhammad ﷺ was twelve years old, Abu Tâlib took him with him to Damascus. When he was twenty-five years old, he married Khadijah رضي الله عنها. Abu Tâlib was not well off. He had several children. Muhammad ﷺ wanted to help his uncle. Hence, he took ‘Ali while he was still a child to live under his care. ‘Ali was born twelve years before the Prophet ﷺ was blessed with the message of Islam. The Prophet ﷺ used to isolate himself from the society of Makkah to worship Allâh following the precepts of the religion of Ibrahim. ‘Ali helped in bringing food to the Prophet ﷺ at a cave called Hira’at a mountain near Makkah

during the period when the Prophet ﷺ was praying to Allâh. He also shared with the Prophet ﷺ in his house, food and whole life. Hence, he learned many things from the Prophet ﷺ, which qualified him to be a true Muslim since his early childhood. ‘Ali was greatly impressed by the manner in which the Prophet ﷺ and his wife Khadijah رضي الله عنها performed their prayers. He noticed that they were leading a life different from the one other people of Makkah were leading. He was also impressed by the way the Prophet ﷺ was dealing with others. He noticed how honest, trustworthy and straightforward the Prophet ﷺ was toward all people, both rich and poor.

Introduction to Islam

While Muhammad was worshipping Allâh at the cave of Hira’, he received the Angel Gabriel. The Angel told him that he had been chosen by Allâh to preach Islam to his people. The Prophet ﷺ was ordered to preach the religion of Islam when Makkah and the whole Arabian Peninsula were indulging in the worship of idols. In the beginning, Allâh ordered the Prophet ﷺ to preach the message of Islam to his close relatives. The Prophet ﷺ and his wife Khadijah رضي الله عنها kept their worship secret. As ‘Ali was living with them in the same house, he knew everything they were

doing. Once, he entered the house and saw the Prophet ﷺ and Khadijah رضي الله عنها praying in a way different from the one his people were doing. He inquired about the prayer they were performing. Although he was still very young to get involved in matters of such importance, the Prophet ﷺ told him that Allâh, the only Lord of the universe, sent him to preach Islam to the people. The Prophet ﷺ also explained to 'Ali the principles of Islam and asked him to accept the message of Islam.

'Ali received this invitation with hesitation. He told the Prophet ﷺ that he would ask his father's counsel. The Prophet ﷺ said to him that if he did not like to accept the religion, he should keep it secret and not tell anybody about it even his father. 'Ali promised to keep the message secret. Knowing how faithful the Prophet ﷺ was, he thought about the invitation very seriously. He was fully convinced that Muhammad ﷺ would not tell him lies or cheat him, especially since he loved him dearly and wished all the best for him. On the next day he came to the Prophet ﷺ to announce that he believed in the religion of Islam. At that time, 'Ali ؑ was only twelve years old. It is reported that he was the first boy to accept Islam. 'Ali ؑ asked the

Prophet ﷺ to teach him how to pray. Now, all members of the house of the Prophet ﷺ were praying together. Ali was standing beside the Prophet ﷺ and his wife during prayers and learning more and more about the sublime principles of Islam. He was an eye witness of the revelation of the Noble Qur'ân and memorized the first Verses revealed to the Prophet ﷺ.

Oppression by the Quraish

The Prophet ﷺ continued preaching Islam secretly to his closest relatives. However, he did not realize much success. Only four or five people accepted the message of Islam. His uncles tried their best to dissuade him.

Three years later, he was ordered by Allâh to proclaim Islam in public. 'Ali ؑ never thought that the Prophet ﷺ would meet such resistance as long as he was calling his people to goodness. However, he was a witness to the insults and oppression that the Prophet ﷺ faced but he was too young to provide any help to him. All he could do was stop the boys whom the pagans instructed to insult the Prophet ﷺ and throw stones and dust at him.

Although 'Ali's father did not accept the Prophet's invitation to Islam, he offered all the protection he could to the Prophet ﷺ. However,

means of protection needed for the call to continue as destined by Allâh. They also told him that they would come back the next year with their chiefs to make the final agreement with the Prophet ﷺ. The next year seventy men and women from Yathrib visited Makkah and agreed with the Prophet ﷺ to provide all means they had to protect him and his followers. Hence, the Prophet ﷺ asked his followers to leave to Yathrib. All the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Yathrib secretly. There they received help and protection. The Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr and ‘Ali رضي الله عنهما did not leave with the other migrants. They stayed with the Prophet ﷺ in Makkah until orders came down from heaven to the Prophet ﷺ to leave to Yathrib.

The Plot

When the chiefs of the Quraish felt disparate that they would not be able to stop the call of Islam and that all Muslims escaped their hold and tyranny, they gathered and plotted to kill the Prophet ﷺ. They agreed that forty strong young men from all clans should surround the house of the Prophet ﷺ and all share in murdering him. The Angel Gabriel brought news of the plot to the Prophet ﷺ and conveyed orders to him from Allâh to migrate to Yathrib. The Prophet ﷺ told his Companion, Abu

Bakr رضي الله عنه, of the plot and asked him to accompany him to Yathrib.

Sublime Sacrifice

‘Ali رضي الله عنه hoped to migrate with the Prophet ﷺ, but he ordered him to stay behind. He told him that some people had entrusted him with some of their precious belongings because they, in spite of their rejection of his call to Islam, believed that he was the trust-worthiest man in the tribe. He also asked ‘Ali رضي الله عنه to sleep in his bed and cover his body with his blanket during the night when he and his Companion would leave Makkah. ‘Ali رضي الله عنه accepted the mission and slept in the Prophet’s bed.

The Prophet ﷺ left his house in the midnight. The forty young men were waiting around the house for the time to come to attack Muhammad and murder him. They did not notice that Muhammad had left his house. At the same time, ‘Ali رضي الله عنه slept in the Prophet’s bed and covered his body with the Prophet’s blanket. The young men were now and then peeping through the cracks of the door. They thought that Muhammad did not leave his house and that he was still sleeping in his bed.

When it was time to go in and kill Muhammad, they removed the bed cover to surprisingly find ‘Ali رضي الله عنه and not Muhammad ﷺ in the bed. Had they not

and asked for three men from the migrants. ‘Ali ؑ with two other Migrants advanced and challenged the Makkans. In no time, ‘Ali ؑ killed his opponent. The battle started fiercely. ‘Ali ؑ was known for his courage and skill in combat. He killed several pagan heroes and took several prisoners of war. The battle ended with a great victory for the Muslims and utter defeat for the pagans. ‘Ali ؑ and his fellow Muslims returned to Al-Madinah to continue their struggle for building the Islamic State.

Marriage to Fâtimah رضي الله عنها

In the same year, the Prophet ﷺ accepted for his daughter, Fâtimah رضي الله عنها, to be betrothed to ‘Ali ؑ. Eleven months later, ‘Ali ؑ and Fâtimah got married. All that ‘Ali ؑ could offer as a dowry was his armor which he had sold for five hundred and eighty dirhams. The Prophet ﷺ gave to his daughter an ordinary cot, a mattress stuffed with palm leaves, a water bag, two grinding stones and two earthen pitchers.

The pure Family

Although they were very poor, ‘Ali and Fâtimah رضي الله عنهما led a happy life. Allâh praised this family

in the Qur’ân for their self-denial. They were having their meal. The meal consisted of dry bread. A beggar knocked the door and asked for some food. They gave him the dry bread and kept hungry. Although they were very poor, they preferred to give the beggar their food to satisfy their Lord. During peace times, ‘Ali earned his living from irrigation of farms in Al-Madinah. The family had their first child and named him Al-Hasan. The child was loved dearly by his family and the Prophet ﷺ.

The pagans attack Again

The pagans did not accept the awful defeat they received at the battle of Badr. They collected their whole energy and wealth and began preparations for another attack against the Muslims. With a force of three thousand men under the command of Abu Sufyan they marched toward Al-Madinah. They were determined to destroy the new state of Islam and bring the Muslims back to Makkah as slaves.

In the first clash of arms the Muslims got the upper hand in spite of the fact that they were less than one third the number of the Quraish army. ‘Ali ؑ fought a big battle and held fast to his position. The archers, whom the Prophet ﷺ placed on top of a small hill behind the Muslim army to protect their

'Ali ؑ Selected as a Caliph

Immediately after the Prophet ﷺ passed away, the Muslims elected Abu Bakr ؓ as a Caliph. 'Ali ؑ helped the Caliph in defending the Islamic State especially when the apostates in the Arabian Peninsula threatened to tumble the state.

After Abu Bakr's death, 'Umar ؓ took over rule upon the recommendation of Abu Bakr ؓ. 'Ali ؑ was appointed as a judge. 'Umar ؓ referred difficult cases to him and took him as his advisor. Before he passed away, 'Umar ؓ selected six persons among whom was 'Ali ؑ to select one of them as a Caliph. The majority preferred 'Uthman to 'Ali ؑ.

During 'Uthman's rule, 'Ali ؑ continued his efforts to strengthen the Islamic State. He kept beside 'Uthman ؓ as an advisor. He did his best to make the state of Islam spread over new lands.

Following the murder of 'Uthman ؓ, the senior Companions insisted that 'Ali ؑ take over. In the beginning, he did not accept the mission. However, both Az-Zubair and Talhah رضي الله عنهما urged him to accept the position of the fourth Caliph of Islam. They wanted a strong man to stop the rebels and restore order to the state. The conditions of the state were very bad at that time. The people who revolted

against and killed 'Uthman ؓ took hold of Al-Madinah and even led the public prayers. The people of the city gave allegiance to the Caliph. However, several regional rulers refused to pledge loyalty to him. They did not deny Ali's ability to lead and his many virtues. However, they felt that he should have taken a firmer stance against Uthman's murderers.

'Ali ؑ was confronted with a huge number of problems. The rebels tumbled the life of the society. They were very strong and liked to control the Caliph and the people. However, 'Ali ؑ wanted to stop them. They requested him to dismiss the rulers who were relatives to 'Uthman ؓ. 'Ali ؑ knew that these rulers were not good. He immediately ordered them to give up their positions. The rulers of some provinces also refused to listen to him and held fast their positions.

Some rulers took the case of 'Uthman's murder as an excuse to revolt against the Caliph. They requested the Caliph to kill the people who killed 'Uthman ؓ. They demanded the killing of the murderers, and in their forcefulness they created problems for the new Caliph.

The situation was very bad for him. He did not like to shed blood and at the same time wanted to